

HINTS FOR THE FORMATION OF LOCAL COMMITTEES OF THE YORKSHIRE ARCHITECTURAL SOCIETY.

The objects of the Yorkshire Architectural Society can only be carried out, in any adequate degree, by rendering as many of its members as possible really interested in its pursuits and active in its operations.

The work which it proposes to itself is one, of no little difficulty, while, at the same time, it is one of the deepest interest to all who have any reverence (and what churchman has not a reverence?) for those beautiful remains of ancient piety which everywhere adorn our land.

This work cannot be done without the labour of many hands, each discharging diligently his allotted task. Every member may do something, if he will, and though to himself perhaps any thing which he can effect (at any rate at first) may seem trifling and unimportant, yet it will not be so, provided it be done in a becoming spirit: it will not be unimportant either to the society or to himself. It is much therefore to be wished that each one will forthwith put to himself the question: "What can I do? Where does my work lie?" and that he will set forth, staff in hand, really determined to do the society's work according to the best of his power.

But it is impossible that in such an undertaking any thing can be effectually done without companionship in the labours and studies which it implies; and equally impossible that persons scattered over so large a space as the two dioceses of York and Ripon, can always or often assemble at the general meetings of the society. It has therefore been thought desirable to recommend the formation of local committees in the more important towns of the county, which may consist of all the members of the society within a reasonable distance, and the operations of which may be directed especially to the respective districts for which they are formed.

Any person with sufficient interest in the proceedings, and sufficient leisure, will find by reference to the list of members those to whom he may in the first place apply for members of the proposed committee. These will meet as soon as convenient, and, having elected for themselves a chairman and secretary, arrange the plan of their operations, and adopt such rules as local circumstances seem to require. It may be well to suggest, that the meetings be held not less frequently than once a month, and during the summer, when there is opportunity of visiting the several Churches in the district, it might, probably be found practicable to increase the number of meetings, and to hold them at any place which furnishes a good Architectural study.

The chief objects which it is desirable to keep in view seem to be these:—

1. The acquisition of accurate knowledge on the subject of Ecclesiastical Architecture.
2. The collection of information respecting the Churches and other objects of Architectural interest within the district.
3. The procuring additional members of the Society.
4. The endeavour to spread amongst people generally, and more especially amongst the Clergy, a just appreciation of Ecclesiastical design, and a deeper love and reverence for that most noble art, the high aim of which is not merely the erection of temples for the worship of God, but also the embodying therein of Christian doctrine.

Of these heads the first, as it is the most difficult, so it is the most necessary. Without some degree of knowledge, nothing, of course, can be done, and the way in which this may be most surely and satisfactorily attained, is by the study of works upon the subject, with reference to the best Churches and Ecclesiastical remains in each neighbourhood, and this will be rendered far more agreeable, as well as profitable, by intercourse with others engaged in the same pursuits.

The list of works recommended by the Society will sufficiently furnish the materials of study, and attention is especially called to "Rickman's Gothic Architecture," the "Glossary of Architecture," "Pugin's True Prin-

ciples of Christian Architecture," and the publications of the Cambridge Camden Society, particularly the "Hints on the Practical Study of Ecclesiastical Antiquities." Accurate perusal of these will lay the foundation and prepare the way for further research, and will also teach, in the examination of existing buildings, how to observe. As Architectural works are, rather expensive, a book club would be a valuable accessory to each Local Committee; at the same time it is desirable that each member should have in his own possession some of the books alluded to, as by this means he might probably be enabled to bestow upon them a more careful study than, supposing the number of members to be at all considerable, would be consistent with book club circulation.

As to the second head, viz. the collection of information respecting the Churches and other objects of Architectural interest in the district, it is very desirable that all Local Committees should adopt the same uniform plan; and in order to effect this, it will be well, after a minute examination of each building, to fill up with great care and as fully as possible, one of the Cambridge Camden Society's schemes; in doing which, the "Hints" above alluded to will furnish considerable assistance. A copy of the schemes thus filled up, with drawings of any interesting parts of the building (which it is always desirable to make with as great accuracy as possible), should be transmitted to the Central Committee.

The blank schemes may at any time be procured on application to the general secretaries.

It will no doubt on many occasions be found practicable to combine together the second and fourth heads, and to extend the party beyond those who are members of the society, to any of their friends who may wish to accompany them. A fine church or a ruined abbey will always repay a few hours' study, and can scarcely fail to call forth the admiration of those even who are wholly unskilled in the art. In such cases the chairman of the committee, or some other person qualified for the task, might give great interest to the meeting, by directing attention to the most remarkable features of the structure, and to its history, peculiarities, and beauties.

In attempting, however, to combine these objects, it seems necessary to suggest the following caution:—Beware lest the party degenerate into a mere picnic party of pleasure; for if it does this, its professed objects, viz. the collection of accurate information by the members, and the imparting instruction on architectural subjects to others, will be wholly frustrated.

Nor perhaps may it be entirely out of place to suggest that, in visiting any sacred edifices, the thought should ever be present to the mind that they are sacred. The cheerfulness and buoyancy of spirit which are the natural result of a pleasant ramble with a pleasant party, might possibly give rise in a mixed company to an unbecoming levity of conversation and demeanour even within the sacred precincts; in order to prevent this, it is hoped that each will remember that the place whereon he stands is holy ground.

Another mode of diffusing a taste for architecture would be the occasional reading of papers on interesting architectural subjects which the public generally might be invited to hear. For instance, it would very frequently be found that a history and description of any one of the churches in the neighbourhood, would, from local circumstances, excite more or less the interest of all, and the information collected to be transmitted to the central committee might easily be thrown into the form of a popular essay. Such papers might in most cases be furnished by some members of the local committee, or if this was found impracticable, an application made to the central committee would usually find some one willing to give the desired lecture.

The circulation of some of the popular pamphlets published by the Cambridge Camden Society would also be found very beneficial in calling forth a more reverential spirit and making men more jealous for the honour of the house of their God.

We must not, however, expect that the object we are seeking can possibly be attained all at once. In a science the study of which has

been so lately revived, it must be admitted that there is much to be learnt by all, even the most advanced. No one has yet been able to shew any just claim to the possession of that secret principle, by which our pious ancestors erected churches which we have not the skill to imitate; which we are too proud to copy, and are not ashamed to parody. This secret principle we can only hope to detect by the accumulation of new architectural facts, and their combination with what is already known; but this process of deduction carried on with care and diligence, and, what is more, in a reverential spirit, may lead us. (If we will only be content meekly to follow up the stream) to that true principle of Christian architecture which our ancestors in the so-called dark ages discovered, but which we in our deeper darkness have lost.

In the course of time the Society expects to have an accurate description of every church in the county, and this very desirable object can of course only be effected by means of the local committees;—to this, therefore, the Society begs to call their especial attention; and in the examination of each church it is hoped that notice may be taken of any violations of architectural order and beauty, but too many of which almost everywhere exist.

For it is not merely the acquisition of knowledge for its own sake which the Society desires; but also the bringing that knowledge to bear as much as possible in restoring the faint and vanishing lines of ancient beauty; in rubbing off the rust of ages from the once beautiful, but now, alas! neglected, temples of our land; in building up the decayed places thereof, and thus saving the nation (if God will) from the curse due to those who dwell in their ceiled houses while God's House lies waste.

It is hoped that all local committees will constantly bear in mind that they are not working simply for themselves, but for the society at large; and therefore of course they will see the desirableness of keeping up a correspondence on all matters with the central committee.

It may be well to add that several local committees have already been formed, and as soon as the whole county has been apportioned, and each part has been placed in some recognized district, a list of the districts, with their boundaries, and the names of the secretaries and the committees formed in each will then be generally distributed.

METEOROLOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Tuesday, April 11.

George Leach, Esq., F.Z.S., Vice-President, in the Chair.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

Wm. Wardell, Esq., of Chester, Wm. Kingdon, Esq., of Hyde Park, and the Rev. John Toplis, B.D., Rector of South Walsham, Norfolk, were elected members.

Papers read.

1st. Improvements on an hourly self-registering Barometer.

2. A paper on an hourly self-registering Rain Gauge.

3. A paper on an hourly self-registering Anemometer.

These three papers from Peter M'Farlane, Esq., of Comrie.

4. A paper on the appearance of the Comet in March, by J. H. Maunly, Esq.

5. A paper on the same subject, by Lieut. Morrison, R.N., shewing that this is its 8th appearance at intervals of 257½ years.

The society's Meteorological day was then discussed, and opinions on the three following queries:—Whether the day should be from sunrise to sunrise, the civil or the astronomical day; and it was resolved, that an invitation should be given in the next number of the Meteorological Quarterly Journal, to all Meteorologists, requesting opinions on this very important point; in the meantime, any suggestions addressed to the Editor, No. 38, Foley Place, will be duly attended to.